

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 11 through 24 are pending in this application. Applicant notes the indicated allowability of previous claims 5 through 8.

Claims 1, 4 and 11 have been amended, claims 5, 7 and 10 have been cancelled, and new claims 12 through 24 added. Care has been exercised to avoid the introduction of new matter. Basically, amended claim 1 represents original claim 1 amended to recite that the connection portion is selectively blown by a laser beam. Original claims 2 and 3 have been reinserted as new claims 12 and 13. Claim 4 has been amended to depend from original claim 3, as originally presented. New claim 14 corresponds to original claim 5, new claim 15 corresponds to original new claim 7, and new claim 16 substantially corresponds to the original claim 10 amended to recite that connection portion is to be selectively blown by a laser beam. New claims 17 through 24 are directed to a method of producing the devices presented in original claims 1 through 9, respectively. Care has been exercised to avoid the introduction of new matter. Adequate descriptive support for the present Amendment should be apparent throughout the originally filed disclosure, noting the disclosed embodiments and related discussion thereof in the written description of the specification as well as the originally presented claims. Applicant submits that the present Amendment does not generate any new matter issue.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 for lack of novelty as evidenced by Lee et al.

In response to the arguments advanced in the Amendment submitted December 23, 2004, the Examiner asserted that interconnection line 30 in the Fig. 5 (presumably Fig. 5F) device of

Lee et al. is made of aluminum and a portion thereof is electrically connected to fuse 50. This rejection is traversed.

Claim 1 is directed to a semiconductor device structured so that the connection portion of an interconnection line is selectively blown by a laser beam. It is not apparent wherein Lee et al. disclose or suggest a semiconductor device as claimed which is structured so that the connection portion is selectively blown by a laser beam, as claimed.

The above argued difference between the claimed semiconductor device and the semiconductor device disclosed by Lee et al. undermines the factual determination of lack of novelty under 35 U.S.C. § 102. *Minnesota Mining & Manufacturing Co. v. Johnson & Johnson Orthopaedics Inc.*, 976 F.2d 1559, 24 USPQ2d 1321 (Fed. Cir. 1992); *Kloster Speedsteel AB v. Crucible Inc.*, 793 F.2d 1565, 230 USPQ 81 (Fed. Cir. 1986). Applicant, therefore, submits that the imposed rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 for lack of novelty as evidenced by Lee et al. is not factually viable and, hence, solicits withdrawal thereof.

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 for lack of novelty or, alternatively, under 35 U.S.C. § 103 for obviousness predicated upon Lee et al.

This rejection is traversed. Specifically, claim 4 depends from claim 3 which, in turn, depends from claim 1. Applicant incorporates herein the arguments previously advanced in traversing the imposed rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 for lack of novelty as evidenced by Lee et al. The additional comments with respect to claim 4 do not cure the argued deficiencies of Lee et al.

Applicant, therefore, submits that the imposed rejection of claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 for lack of novelty or alternatively, under 35 U.S.C. § 103 for obviousness predicated upon Lee et al. is not factually or legally viable and, hence solicit withdrawal thereof.

Claims 9 through 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 for obviousness predicated upon Lee et al. in view of Delpech et al.

This rejection is traversed. Specifically, claim 9 depends from independent claim 1 and claim 11 depends from new claim 16 which is basically an amended original claim 10. Accordingly, the patentability of new claim 16 will be advocated in responding to this rejection.

Each of claim 1, upon which claim 9 depends, and claim 16, upon which claim 11 depends, is directed to a semiconductor device structured so that the connection portion of an interconnection line is selectively blown by a laser beam. As previously argued, it is not apparent wherein Lee et al. disclose or suggest such a structure. The additional reference to Delpech et al. does not cure this argued deficiency of Lee et al.

Applicant, therefore, submits that the imposed rejection of claims 9 through 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 for obviousness predicated upon Lee et al. in view of Delpech et al. is not factually or legally viable and, hence, solicits withdrawal.

New claims 12 through 24.

New claims 12, 13, 14 and 15 basically correspond to original claims 2, 3, 5 and 7, respectively, and depend from independent claim 1, the patentability of which has been argued *supra*. Accordingly, claims 12, 13, 14 and 15 are free of the applied prior art for reasons previously argued.

As previously pointed out, claim 16 is free of the applied prior art, notably, Lee et al., in that it is directed to a semiconductor device structured such that the connection portion of an interconnection portion is selectively blown by a laser beam, a feature which is not apparent from Lee et al.

New claims 17 through 24 are directed to a method of manufacturing a semiconductor device, which device substantially corresponds to those set forth in claims 1 through 9, respectively. Independent method claim 17 requires the formation of a fuse electrically connected to a connection portion of an interconnection line, wherein the fuse and connection portion are formed of different metals, and subsequently selectively blowing the fuse when the circuit structure is to be changed.

Applicants submits that the claimed method is free of the applied prior art. Applicant further submits that examination of method claims 17 through 24 is proper since the claimed method produces the articles specified in claims 1 through 9, respectively.

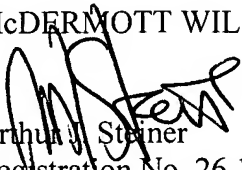
Applicant acknowledges, with appreciation, the Examiner's allowance of previous claims 5 through 8. Based upon the arguments submitted *supra*, it should be apparent that the imposed rejections have been overcome and that all pending claims are in condition for immediate allowance. Favorable consideration is, therefore, solicited.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Application No.: 10/649,737

Respectfully submitted,

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